

Minutes of the Mantua PTA
March 5, 2003
Mantua Elementary School

The president called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. Present at the meeting were:

Executive Board: *Laura Mead, Carole Thomas, Pam Promisel, Beth McKeown, Rob Luftglass*

School/FCPS Representatives: *Jan-Marie Fernandez, Tina Tingler, Elaine Wellner, Dean Tisdadt, Ernestine Heastie, Kay Kory, Janet Sottolano*

Board Members: *Allen Clark, Cheryl May, Chris Love, Dee Ann Jeremiah, Loren Brandman, Randi Kirkland, Laura Samotshozo, Robin Hoffman, Jennifer Cooper, Beverly Boughman, Linda Halstead*

General Membership: *Pam Pavord, Lori Bryant, Melissa Morgan, Kris Abel-Helwig*

School Board Members Ernestine Heastie and Kay Kory, along with Dean Tisdadt (Assistant Superintendent, Facilities and Transportation), briefed the PTA on the ongoing plans to address overcrowding at Mantua. Mrs. Heastie discussed how the Texaco technology grant, along with the new GT Center at Mosby Woods and the Pupil Placement freeze was the impetus for the boundary change. FCPS staff and the school board are investigating ways to reduce overcrowding. Discussion items regarding ways to reduce overcrowding included:

- Reduce the size of the GT Center – instead of two classes per grade level, one.
- Add a second serving line to cafeteria, and different style of cafeteria tables – this recommendation has been finalized and will be implemented during the summer.
- The FCPS Instructional Accommodation Team is analyzing space within the school to see if opportunities can be found to optimize space utilization.
- Investigate the installation of a Quad instead of 4 trailers.
- Investigate the potential use of a Modular Unit.

Most of these options could be completed by the fall (except for a modular unit, which could take up to two years since they are specially constructed for space).

Mrs. Heastie informed the PTA that while overcrowding at Mantua is an issue, there are many other schools in as bad or worse shape than Mantua – 27 schools have at least as many trailers. Within five years, all surrounding schools are projected to be overcrowded, so there would be no benefit in moving students from Mantua to other school(s).

The possibility of converting the two pods into classrooms has been reviewed, but Mrs. Heastie agrees that the Mantua pods would not be conducive to being converted. The Facilities department still needs to make the final determination though. They will report back after a scheduled walk-through.

Mrs. Heastie also provided information on Snow Day makeup schedule proposal. The current proposal is to extend days 30 minutes to add instruction time from 4/21-5/16, and the removal of the April 7 teacher workday. She also provided copies of the FY 2004 Advertised Budget.

Beth McKeown made a motion that the minutes of the February 5, 2002 meeting be approved. Chris Love seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Beth McKeown presented the **Treasurer's Report**. She provided an Income Statement for the seven months ending February 28, 2003. There were no major items to report on. Beth did ask that checks be turned in promptly so that they may be deposited and those who wrote the checks know that they have been received.

Laura Mead presented the **Announcements**:

- The PTA is looking for volunteers for the nominating committee. At the April meeting, we plan on selecting the nominating committee. In May, the nominating committee will present names, and in June we will vote for next year's executive board.
- The new web site is up and running. Allen Clarke reported that most of content is from the old site. Any new input would be useful, especially activities and photos. There is also a new section on Mantua Nights/Restaurants.
- The basketball season is wrapping up with the tournament in progress and banquets scheduled for March 18 and 20.

Mrs. Fernandez made the **Principals' Report**:

- She welcomed Elaine Wellner back.
- Several of the staff will be participating at an education conference next week - 19 staff members are attending and two groups are presenting.
- On April 3, Mantua will be one of the schools in the pyramid hosting the K¹²NECTS business partners where they will be able to see their donations at work.
- April 7 will not be a teacher workday since this will be a snow makeup day. It will be a regular Monday schedule (early dismissal).
- Literacy Night will be April 10.
- A Reading Challenge is being sponsored by the SCA during March. Students have been challenged to read 3,000 books in March. Mrs. Fernandez will do something foolish on 4/1. The individual and Class that reads the most books will be on a Read Poster and have a Pizza party.
- Mrs. Fernandez commented that a side benefit from the boundary change is that the overcrowding issue is more visible.

Mrs. Wellner mentioned upcoming SOL testing for 5th graders. Ms. Tingler discussed the success of the sign language classes for the families of the deaf children, with over 50 family members attending. She expressed thanks to the Hospitality committee for all the

desserts and to the whole PTA for providing financial support for airfare for two teachers for a conference.

Laura has asked Jan-Marie for wish list from the teachers and staff to be discussed next meeting.

Teacher Representative Report: Mrs. Sottolano expressed thanks for the money for books. The previously discussed grant for Baltimore trip for Success by 8 is not needed this year, but she will be requesting a grant next year for a trip to Aquarium. The Boyer celebration – with a focus on Exploration of Africa – is scheduled for April 7.

The following **Committee Reports** were filed:

Carnival: Laura Mead reported for Pam Promisel - the carnival is eleven days from now. Plans are in full swing. Please volunteer for class booth shifts. Additional volunteers are needed for a variety of areas.

Parent education: One or two more sessions are planned. Survey results will be published soon.

Odyssey of the Mind: Our school did very well, with the 5th grade team winning 1st place in the long problem and 2nd overall. Several other teams did a great job.

Principal's Coffee: Kris Abel-Helwig for Barb Suidikas announced that their last coffee was very informative and that the next two coffees are scheduled for March 13 (topic is web sites for parents) and May 8.

FLEX: Linda Halstead – we have largest FLEX program in county and only one with Italian. The Italian Embassy has come to us to add Italian to the curriculum. They would like to meet with the principal and parents. Please see Linda with ideas/comments.

Kid's Care Club: Jennifer Cooper announced that Hoops and Jump for the Heart is coming up tomorrow and Friday. Bring in forms. Final collection March 14.

Math Happenings went home yesterday for first time – we have already received positive feedback.

Motions Carried

A motion carried to approve the minutes of the February 5, 2002.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 pm. The next meeting is April 2, 2003.

Robert Luftglass
Secretary